

In the Specification:

Please insert before the first paragraph of the application:

This application is the national stage application of international application number PCT/DE2003/001955, filed on June 12, 2003, which claims the benefit of priority to German Patent Application DE 102 29 493.3, filed on July 1, 2002, both of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace the paragraph on page 8, lines 1-14 with the following:

The semiconductor structure includes a pad metal 3 having a surface F and a thickness D3, for example a thick layer of aluminum, a passivation layer 8, a substrate 1, a semiconductor element 2, for example a transistor 2, positioned on the substrate 1, the transistor 2 being arranged beneath the surface F of the pad metal 3, a multiplicity of metal layers 4.x, and a multiplicity of insulation layers 5.y which separate the metal layers 4.x from one another. For the sake of clarity, fig. 1 diagrammatically depicts only the first and top two metal layers 4.1, 4.x-1 and 4.x; depending on the technology used, currently up to 11 metal layers 4.x may be arranged above one another.

Please replace the paragraph on page 9, lines 16-18 with the following:

~~Other arrangements of apertures 7.x and vias 6 will result when the person skilled can be provided by one of skill in the art applies his specialist knowledge and abilities.~~

Please replace the paragraph on page 9, line 32 to page 10, line 4 with the following:

~~The overall result of the invention is that a~~A suitable damping and stabilizing structure is provided which enables any type of electrical semiconductor elements to be arranged beneath the surface of the pad metal without there being any risk of damage to these semiconductor elements in the event of ~~pressures, as pressure being applied. This pressure can occur, for example, during bonding or testing. The structure is achieved even~~ without expensive process changes or without the need for additional process

features to be added. Furthermore, it is now possible to utilize the region beneath the surface of the pad metal, for example, for power supply tracks